developing and nurturing human resource; strengthening basic research in the areas of frontline science & engineering and, promoting S&T interventions in major socio-economic ministries and states so as to make them real stake holders of S&T. The support to research is enhanced through S&T mission mode programmes, establishment of new research centres of excellence, international collaborative projects, strengthening of R&D infrastructure in academic institutions and research labs, institution of prestigious fellowships like Swaranajayanti Fellowship for outstanding Young Scientists, Ramanna Fellowship for performing scientists, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Fellowship for Young Scientists, Ramanujan Felowships to attract outstanding scientists and engineers from all over the world to take up scientific research in our country, J.C Bose Fellowships to recognize and support active, performing Indian scientists & engineers. Major new initiatives include National Biotechnology Strategy; Nano Science & Technology Mission; National Mission on Bamboo Applications; Seismology Mission; Drug & Pharmaceuticals R&D; New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative; Tsunami Warning System etc.

Filter Technique for clean drinking water

†63. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pune-based National Chemical Laboratory has developed an affordable filter technique for making potable water germs-free;

(b) if so, the efforts made by Government to use this technology for providing clean drinking water in rural India;

(c) whether any proposal has been sent to the Department of Drinking Water under the Ministry of Rural Development for using this affordable technology in the mission of supply of drinking water;

(d) if so, the progress made in this regard so far, and

(e) if not, whether Government propose to promote such technology?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The CSIR laboratory, National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune has developed the 'Ultra-filtration (UF) membrane', which does not allow bacteria and viruses (Hepatitis 'A' & 'E') to pass

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

through. The technology has been transferred to an entrepreneur, M/s. Memorane Filters (India) Pvt. Ltd., Pune for commercial manufacture of the membrane for water filters. The filtration device based on UF membrane enables its operation with tap water. A manufacturing facility has been set-up by the entrepreneur for assembly of water filters of different models and sizes, including a hand pump operated system capable of delivering over 125 litres/hour of potable water. The invention has been patented in India and abroad.

(c) to (e) No, Sir, no proposal has been sent to the Department of Drinking Water under the Ministry of Rural Development for using this affordable technology in the mission of supply of drinking water; as these water filters are an industrial product, manufactured by an entrepreneur on license from NCL (CSIR). Its manufacturer, government departments and NGOs are making efforts to propagate it in rural areas. The device is being repeatedly demonstrated by CSIR in various exhibitions and trade fairs. The government has provided water filters based on UF membrane technology to NGOs in different parts of the country for dissemination.

Reservation in private sector

84. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposal for extension of reservation of SC/ST in Private Sector has been abandoned by Government;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have examined possibility of enacting a law to provide for such reservation and put it in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to prevent judicial intervention; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. In pursuance of the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), a Group of Ministers (GOM) has been constituted to examine the issue of affirmative action, including reservation in private sector, and to initiate a dialogue with industry to see how best the private sector can fulfill the aspirations of youth belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The GOM had also obtained the opinions of three legal luminaries. A final decision is yet to be taken.